

### ***Remarks***

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 5, 11-13, 19, 21-22, 24-27, and 33-43 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 13, and 27 being the independent claims. Claims 1, 13, and 27 are sought to be amended. Support for the amendments can be found, among other places, in the Specification at Paragraphs [0087] through [0101] and Figure 9. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Applicants reserve the right to prosecute similar or broader claims, with respect to the amended claims, in the future.

### **Examiner Interview**

The Examiner is thanked for his time during a personal interview with Applicants' representative, Robert Sokohl (Reg. No. 36,013), on February 2, 2010. Applicants submit the following remarks in response to the Examiner's comments. Based on the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

### **Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103**

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 5, 13, 19, 27, 33-43 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,734,879 to Hasha et al. ("Hasha") and U.S. Patent Pub. No. U.S. 2002/0022991 to Sharood et al. ("Sharood") and U.S. Patent No. 6,941,356 to Meyerson ("Meyerson"). The Examiner has also rejected claims 1, 5, 11-13, 19, 21-22, 24-27, and 33-43 under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Pub. No. US 2003/0103088 to Dresti et al. (“Dresti”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,198,479 to Humpleman et al. (“Humpleman”) and in further view of Meyerson.

For the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner’s rejections.

In rejecting independent claims 1, 13, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the Examiner explains that the term “affiliate system component” within the meaning of the claims may be broadly interpreted to capture “any system component that shares some relationship with other system components.” Thus, according to the Examiner, it is fair to rely on the Meyerson reference to the extent that it teaches configuring a user interface of a system component (such as a personal computer) to show or hide application choices, network choices, and peripheral choices available via peripheral devices, so long as such devices are “related by network” to the system component. However, such a broad application of Meyerson ignores the language defining the invention at issue. An affiliate system component according to Applicants’ claimed invention does not describe any component that shares any relationship with another component. The mere fact that a device may share the same network as another device does not establish it as an affiliate system component of the other. Such a “relationship” is too passive and tenuous to support the Examiner’s rejections. Rather, according to Applicants’ claimed invention, an affiliate system component is a device that is actively involved with the performance by a system component of a specific activity selected by the user.

In order to possess the required relationship with a selected system component, an affiliate system component must be able to provide an input to the selected system component and be capable of being controlled by proxy (i.e., the user controls the

affiliate system component by controlling the selected system component via the GUI displayed on the control screen). If a device has those characteristics, then it can be hidden from display without adversely affecting the user's ability to select a desired activity and control all the devices involved with that activity. For example, if the user is watching a movie on the television, he or she can increase the volume by activating the appropriate control objects displayed on the control screen associated with the television. The system, however, actually responds to the user's selections by sending appropriate control signals or commands to the amplifier that supplies audio input to the television, but which may be hidden from view on the control screen by the user. As such, the amplifier is controlled by proxy via the user's control of the television.

Meyerson does not teach or disclose an interface, a method, or a product for controlling a selected system component and proxying control of an affiliated system component(s) that provide input to the selected system component and that can be hidden from display on the user's control screen without affecting the user's ability to select a desired activity or control the devices associated with the selected activity. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that neither the proposed combination of Hasha and Sharood and Meyerson nor the proposed combination of Dresti and Humpleman and Meyerson render independent claims 1, 13 and 27 unpatentable under Section 103(a).

### **Dependent Claims**

The claims that depend from independent claims 1, 13, and 27, are likewise not rendered unpatentable by the Hasha-Sharood-Meyerson combination or the Dresti-

Humpleman-Meyerson combination for the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend and further in view of their own respective features.

### **Conclusion**

Because the Hasha-Sharood-Meyerson combination proposed by the Examiner does not teach or suggest each and every feature of independent claims 1, 13 and 27, as explained above, these claims, and the claims that depend therefrom, cannot be rendered unpatentable for obviousness by that combination.

Similarly, because the Dresti-Humpleman-Meyerson combination proposed by the Examiner does not teach or suggest each and every feature of independent claims 1, 13 and 27, as explained above, these claims, and the claims that depend therefrom, also cannot be rendered unpatentable for obviousness by that combination.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner's rejection of pending claims 1, 5, 11-13, 19, 21-22, 24-27, and 33-43 be reconsidered and withdrawn and allowed to issue.

### ***Conclusion***

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for

allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'RS', is written over the printed name of Robert Sokohl.

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